

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing of claims in the application:

#### **LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently amended) A locking assembly comprising:

a pair of closeable devices secured together in contiguous ~~adjacency~~ overlying relationship and being slidably displaceable, each relative to the other, each of said closeable devices having opposing end portions defining a closeable gap therebetween; and

a clasp disposed on said opposing end portions, said clasp being operable to selectively retain said opposing end portions in an overlapping relationship or release said opposing end portions to define said closeable gap, said clasp of both closeable devices being simultaneously inoperable responsive to one of said pair of closeable devices being disposed in a first position relative to the other of said closeable devices, said clasp of both closeable devices being simultaneously operable responsive to said one of said pair of closeable devices being disposed in a second position relative to said other of said closeable devices.

2. (Currently amended) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 1, wherein said pair of closeable devices are secured in said contiguous ~~adjacency~~ overlying relationship by at least one band disposed around said pair of closeable devices.

3. (Currently amended) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 1, wherein said pair of closeable devices are secured in said contiguous ~~adjacency~~ overlying relationship by at least one groove having a first cross-sectional profile formed in at least one surface of one of said pair of closeable devices and at least one protrusion having a second cross-sectional profile extending from at least one surface of the other of said closeable devices, said first cross-sectional profile being complementary to said second cross-sectional profile, said at least one protrusion being engaged in a corresponding one of said at least one groove.

4. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 3, wherein said at least one protrusion is a ridge continuously disposed on at least one surface of said other of said closeable devices, said ridge being terminated at a predetermined distance from each side of said clasp.

5. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 3, wherein said at least one protrusion is a plurality of bosses each having said second cross-sectional profile.

6. (Currently amended) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 1, wherein said pair of closeable devices are secured in said contiguous ~~adjacency~~ overlying relationship by at least one elongated fastener extending through an elongated slot formed in at least one of said pair of closable devices.

7. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 1, wherein said clasp includes interlocking protuberances respectively disposed on each of said opposing end sections of said pair of closeable devices.

8. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 7, wherein said interlocking protuberances are of a substantially trapezoidal cross-sectional profile.

9. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 7, wherein said interlocking protuberances are of a substantially L-shaped cross-sectional profile.

10. (Currently amended) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 1, wherein each of said pair of closable devices are formed in a substantially annular contour and is angularly slidably displaceable relative to the other of said pair of closable devices.

11. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 10, wherein at least one of said pair of closeable devices is constructed from a resilient material, said clasp being retained in said overlapping relationship by interlocking protuberances being biased one against the other, said interlocking protuberances respectively disposed on each of said opposing end sections of said pair of closable devices.

12. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 10, wherein at least one of said pair of closeable devices includes a connection adaptation on a surface of each of said opposing end sections thereof for connecting a locking ring operating tool thereto.

13. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 12, wherein said connecting adaptation is one of the group consisting of a depression, a hole, and a protuberance.

14. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 10, wherein at least one of said pair of closeable devices includes at least one roughened exposed surface.

15. (Currently amended) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 1, wherein each of said pair of closable devices is a linearly extending member and is longitudinally slidably displaceable relative to the other of said pair of closable devices.

16. (Original) The locking assembly as recited in Claim 15, wherein said clasp is retained in said overlapping relationship by interlocking protuberances biased one against the other, said interlocking protuberances being respectively disposed on each of said opposing end sections of said pair of closable devices.

17. (Currently amended) A key ring comprising a pair of closeable rings secured together in contiguous ~~adjacency~~ overlapping relationship and ~~in being~~ angularly slidably displaceable ~~relationship~~ one with respect to the other, each of said closeable rings having opposing end portions adapted to be selectively disposed in overlapping relationship and displaceable one from the other to define a gap therebetween, said end portions of each of said closeable rings including a

respective pair of complementary interlocking members respectively formed thereon, said overlapping end portions being simultaneously locked against displacement responsive to one of said closeable rings being disposed in a first angular position relative to the other of said closeable rings, said overlapping end portions being simultaneously free to be displaced responsive to said one of said closeable rings being disposed in a second annular position relative to said other closeable ring.

18. (Currently amended) The key ring as recited in Claim 17, wherein said pair of closeable rings are secured in said contiguous ~~adjacency~~ overlying relationship by at least one band disposed around both of said closeable rings.

19. (Currently amended) The key ring as recited in Claim 17, wherein said pair of closeable rings are secured in said contiguous ~~adjacency~~ overlying relationship by means of at least one groove having a first cross-sectional profile being formed on a surface of one of said pair of closeable rings and at least one protrusion having a second cross-sectional profile extending from at least one surface of the other of said closeable rings, said first cross-sectional profile being complementary to said second cross-sectional profile, said at least one protrusion being engaged in a corresponding one of said at least one groove.

20. (Original) The key ring as recited in Claim 19, wherein said at least one protrusion is a ridge continuously disposed on at least one surface of said other of said closeable rings.

21. (Original) The key ring as recited in Claim 20, wherein said ridge is terminated at a predetermined distance from each said opposing end portions of said other of said closeable rings.

22. (Original) The key ring as recited in Claim 19, wherein said at least one protrusion is a plurality of bosses each having said second cross-sectional profile.

23. (Currently amended) The key ring as recited in Claim 17, wherein said pair of closeable rings are secured in said contiguous ~~adjacency~~ overlaying relationship by a plurality of elongated fasteners of a first diameter, each of said plurality of elongated fasteners having enlarged portions of a second diameter at each end thereof, said second diameter being greater than said first diameter, each of said elongated fasteners extending transversely through a corresponding one of a plurality of elongated slots formed in one of said pair of closeable rings and through a corresponding one of a plurality of elongated slots formed in the other of

said pair of closable rings, each of said plurality of elongated slots having longitudinal walls transversely separated by a distance greater than said first diameter and less than said second diameter.